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Prof. Joshua Lederberg
President Emeritus
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Dear Professor Lederberg,

I am deeply in your debt for the splendid papers you have sent to me. I am so glad that I asked for them. The issues you raise acquire an extraordinary clarity in the light of your autobiographical remarks. I was particularly impressed by the recurring theme of religion and science: the observation in your 1995 interview that the prestige of science may be diminished precisely because "religious issues generally don't seem to count for very much right now" would seem to suggest that the fortunes --for better or worse--- of religion and science are inextricably linked together. From the other 1995 paper you sent me I note that you believe science to have failed utterly as a counter-religion, which may leave the field open (I suppose) to a resurgence of conservative religion such as we find in various fundamentalisms in the world today. I now can see why you appeared reluctant at the Academy to pronounce either good or bad the decline in the prestige of science.

Your marvelous paper of 1972 on the control of science in relation to the freedoms of research remains powerful and timely. Prometheus and Hesiod are aptly introduced into this discussion, and Hesiod's *Works and Days* are perhaps even more pertinent than the *Theogony*. Near the beginning of the *Works and Days*, in introducing Prometheus' theft, Hesiod says, "The gods kept hidden from men the means of life. Otherwise you would easily do enough work in a day to supply you for a full year without work... But Zeus in the anger of his heart hid the means of life because crafty Prometheus had deceived him." The gods are therefore responsible for our difficulties in understanding and exploiting the world around us, but Hesiod believes that what he calls the means of life (*bios*) are ultimately accessible, only hidden. This belief helps to explain his doctrine of the two strifes (*erides*), the destructive strife and the productive one (which we would probably call healthy competition).

I wish that I could offer you something as rich and thoughtful as you have given me, but I take the liberty of reciprocating with a little memorial piece about Arnaldo Momigliano, whom you may perhaps have known. I hope it is of some interest. With renewed gratitude,

Yours sincerely,